

- 11 -

CLAIMS

1. A hinge mechanism for a limb protector including first and second supports each adapted to engage a part of a limb in either side of an articulated joint, the hinge mechanism being pivotally connected to both supports, and wherein the hinge mechanism comprises a base plate, an arm pivotally rotatable against the plate about an axis substantially perpendicular thereto and located to one end of the arm, and means for connecting the support members pivotally to the other end of the arm and to the plate, all of the three axes of rotation of the pivotal connections being substantially parallel, and wherein associated with each of the three pivotal connections are means for restricting the relative degree of rotation of the respective two members to a defined amount.

2. A hinge mechanism according to Claim 1 wherein the arm is mounted rotationally on a circular boss on the plate and the plate has stop means formed thereon restricting the angular rotation of the arm.

3. A hinge mechanism according to Claim 2 wherein the degree of rotation of the arm is limited by locating the arm in a recessed portion of the plate which is bounded by radial walls lined at an angle to one another.

4. A hinge mechanism according to Claim 1, 2 or 3 wherein the angular rotation of each support member relative to the end of the arm or the base plate respectively is restricted by the passage of a stud or post along an arcuate slot centred on the pivot axis.

5 6. A hinge mechanism according to Claim 4 or 5 and including one or more spacers inserted into the arcuate slot(s) to limit the degree of rotation by enabling the stud or post to move only along a portion of the arcuate slot(s).

7. A hinge mechanism according to ~~any one of the~~
~~preceding Claims~~ ^{9A. Hinge Protector} wherein the support members are made of rigid plastics or fibre reinforced resin type composition and include a metal reinforcement associates with the pivotal connection to the hinge mechanism.

15

8. A limb protector or brace including a pair of hinge mechanisms according to any one of the preceding Claims.

Add
A2

Ad 7